AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) to (c) When the Chief Ministers of North Eastern States called on the Prime Minister on June 21, 2000, the Prime Minister informed that both Centre and State Governments have to fight militancy and terrorism together. The State Governments have to strengthen their police set-up to make it more effective in tackling insurgency. Both police training and equipment would have to be improved

Prime Minister also informed the Chief Ministers that Centre has taken a number of steps to assist the State Governments in this regard. These include schemes of modernisation of police forces, reimbursement of security related expenditure, sanction of a scheme for fencing of remaining 2400 Km. of Indo-Bangladsh border at a cost of Rs. 1334 crores, Sanction of 16 India Reserve Battalions and deployment of para-military forces.

Autonomy Issue of Assam

1147. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of HOME AFFARIS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has drawn to the statement of the Chief Minister of Assam, reported in 'The Deccan Chronicle' dated the 1st July, 2000 to the effect that granting autonomy to Assam and other NE States in the only viable solution to the problem of insurgency in the region;

(b) if so, whether Government agree to this viewpoint and would agree to this demand; and

(c) if answer topart (b) above in the nagative, the steps proposed to be taken to curb the insurgency in that region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The Government has taken various steps to bring law and order situation in the region under control. These include, *inter-alia*, deployment of para-military forces and army in the States, coordinated action by Army, Para-military Forces and State Police for counter insurgency operations, declaration of major insurgent groups as unlawful association under the Unlawful activities

(Prevention) Act, 1967. Regular review of the situation both at State and Central Government level is being made. The Government has also given thrust on speedy economic development and generation of employment opportunities in the North Eastern States.

Jihad in Kashmir

1148. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the fact that Mast Gul (of CHARAR-E-SHARIEF fame 1995) is returning to the Kashmir Valley to fight "JIHAD" again; and

(b) if so, the special vigilance proposed on the Line of Control to ensure that such militants do not enter the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) While there is no specific input in this regard, the possibility of Mast Gul trying to infiltrate to take up terrorist activities in J and K cannot be ruled out. In any case Security Forces are vigilant and are taking all possible steps to curb infiltration which, *inter-alia*, includes strengthening border management, gearing up of intelligence machinery, close surveillance of the border by intensive patrolling, conduct of special operations, Nakas and ambushes, provision of specialised equipments like night vision devices etc.

Agitation in Dharwad for Statehood

1149. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether agitations were held in Dharwad recently to form a separate State for North Karnataka; and

(b) if so, the steps proposed to issue guidelines to curb such demands that no districts are negelected in development activities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI I.D. SWAMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Developemental activities in the districts are carried out by the State Governments. The Union Govt, issues guidelines on the utilisation of funds provided by it under centrally sponsored schemees